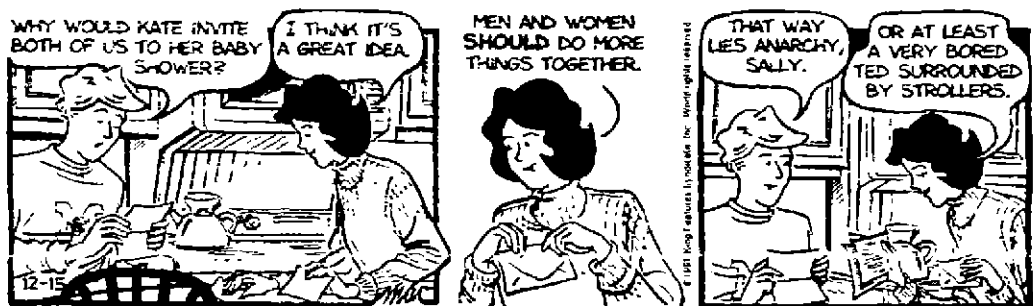


BLONDIE



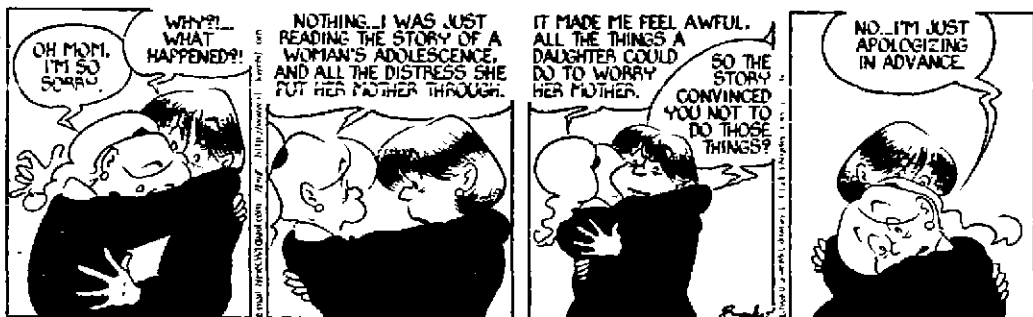
SALLY FORTH



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



9 CHICKWEED LANE



ANDY CAPP



ROSE IS ROSE



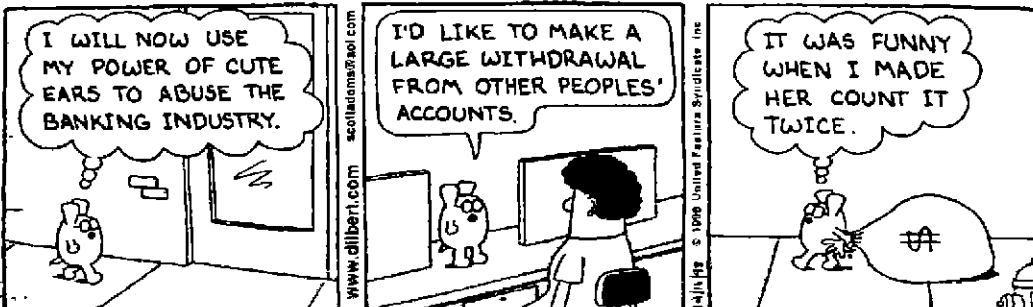
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM



DILBERT



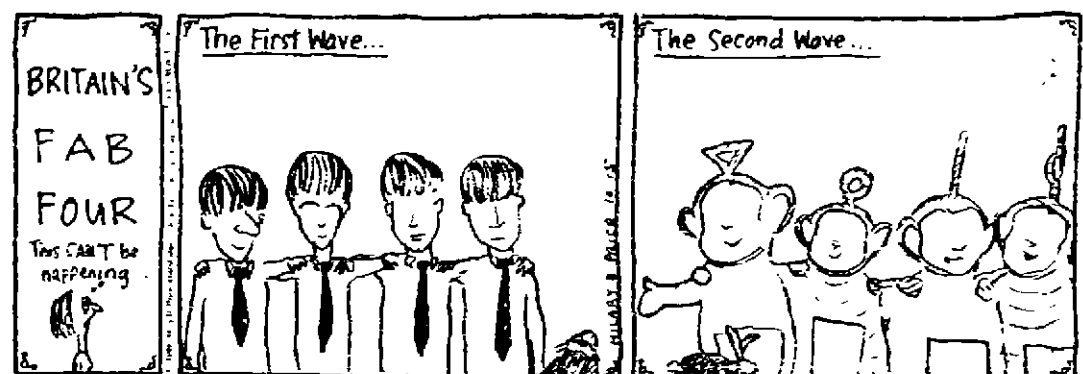
DENNIS THE MENACE



FAMILY CIRCUS



RHYMES WITH ORANGE



RALPH



Today's Birthdays

Country singer Ernest Ashworth is 70. Actor-comedian Tim Conway is 65. Singer Cindy Birdsong (The Supremes) is 59. Rock musician Dave Clark (The Dave Clark Five) is 56. Rock musician Carmine Appice (Vanilla Fudge) is 52. Actor Don Johnson is 49. Movie director Alex Cox ("Repo Man") is 44. Actor Justin Ross is 44. Rock musician Paul Simonon (The Clash) is 43.

I NEED HELP



Geppetto's inspiration.

SCRABBLE

D	M	R	E	U	U	R	
D	A	A	E	T	P	H	
B	T	E	O	O	S	I	
N	I	I	O	K	L	S	

PAR SCORE 110-120
by JUDD

Directions: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (Merrim-Webster) and OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

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RACK 1:
RACK 2:
RACK 3:
RACK 4:

DOUBLE WORD SCORE:
TRIPLE WORD SCORE:
FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

For solution, see Classified.

WORD SLEUTH

Three vowels in a row

K J G D Z W T Q N K H D A X U
R P P M J G D A X B V S Q N K
I F F L A M B E A U D A X V I
J H A W A I I Q U R O M E J H
F U C A Y T O A W E U R E P N
L J N H F D E N V A I B U Z X
V T R E Q T O A A U M L Q K I
H F D B A Z C Y U R W O R E V
T R Q H O U N L K I A H A U F
D C C A E Z X W I I E P M O P
V U U E I D A S C R Q O N M M

Monday's unlisted clue: MOUSE

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Tuesday's unlisted clue hint: SOUTH STATE

Adieu Ciao Lieu Plateau
Beau Evacuee Marquee Pompeii
Bureau Flambeau Moue Purfieur
Chateau Juneau Paranoia

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For solution, see Classified.

HOROSCOPE

For Wednesday, Dec. 16, 1998

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Striking out on your own feels much better than you had anticipated.
TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Someone is extremely impressed by your vigor and stamina. The balls are in your court when it comes to love.
GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Don't ignore an unwelcome pattern that is becoming more and more evident.
CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Put your own emotional needs ahead of someone else's personal drama.
LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Appreciate the burning fires that are within you, and find a creative way to release them.
VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Everything that you do sets a wonderful example of excellence.
LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Your gregarious nature leads you on a quest for knowledge.
SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Fortunately, even the heat of the moment fails to rob you of your very good senses.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Enjoy being the long-anticipated guest among an admiring crowd of friends.
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) A fortuitous balance between yin and yang forces means that romance is highly likely.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Remember that you are only as wise or as foolish as you feel.
PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Resist the enormous temptation to laugh at an inappropriate time — you'll be glad that you did. Should you inadvertently offend someone, be sure to make amends quickly.

ACES

By Bobby Wolff

West leads the heart king, cashes his queen, and then shifts to his diamond jack. South wins dummy's king and ruffs a heart with his trump jack. He leads a low trump to dummy's nine to ruff dummy's last heart and cashes his diamond ace. When he leads another trump to dummy's king and leads a low club from dummy, what should East play? Unless East asks the vital question, he is likely to play low routinely. If he does, South inserts his nine and loses to West's king. West is now endplayed and must surrender South's 10th trick. South's line of play is revealing. Why has South gone to the trouble of stripping both red suits from his hand and from dummy? Obviously, he has devious thoughts regarding the club suit. The play marks South with six spades and four red cards, leaving him with three clubs. Therefore, it cannot hurt East to reject routine and play second hand high. When East plays his queen, he gives South something to think about. When South wins and crosses to dummy to lead another club, South has a problem when East follows low. If he thinks East split his king and queen, he will play the jack and lose the game. Only if declarer chooses the correct technical play (inserting the nine) will he make his game.

NORTH ♠ 10 9 6
♥ 10 9 6 2
♦ K 8
♣ 6 5 3

WEST ♠ 3
♥ A K Q J 7
♦ J 10 9 2
♣ K 8 7

EAST ♠ 8 2
♥ 8 3
♦ 7 6 5 4 3
♣ Q 10 9 2

SOUTH ♠ A Q J 7 5 4
♥ 5 4
♦ A J 9

Vulnerable Both
Dealer South

The bidding:
South 1♠ West 2♥ North 2♠ East 3♠
4♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Heart king

N.Y. TIMES CROSSWORD

No. 1103

ACROSS

- 1 Pile
- 5 Alternative to plastic at a supermarket
- 10 Winter transport
- 14 Steptop
- 15 Where Sun Valley is
- 16 Fashioned
- 17 Crockett or Jones
- 18 Static
- 19 Mid-east bigwig
- 20 Lose it
- 21 Vessel in an alcove
- 22 Society's 400
- 23 It's a waste of time
- 27 Thespian
- 30 Lily plants
- 31 Vehicles with booms

- 33 Bread for a stew, e.g.
- 34 Missile berth
- 38 Inner city structure
- 41 Some sheep
- 42 Terhune title character
- 43 Cram into the hold
- 44 Warner Brothers' J. Fudd
- 46 Antique shop item
- 47 1967 Galthra Christie thriller
- 52 Jeopardy
- 53 Nicotine's partner
- 54 Inventor Elias
- 58 Chapters in world history

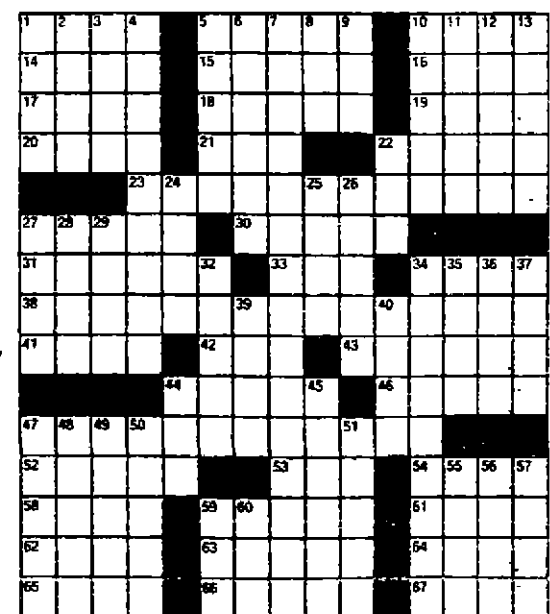
- 59 Well-coordinated
- 61 Privy to
- 62 Malicious
- 63 Butter up?
- 64 Hardly Mr. Cool
- 65 New Year's Eve song word
- 66 Hold for later, as big news
- 67 Legs, to a zoot suiter

DOWN

- 1 Backlayers carry them
- 2 Flair
- 3 Thomas Edison
- 4 Corner conveniences
- 5 Betty Grable's photo for one
- 6 Idolizes
- 7 Modern diller?
- 8 Remarks requesting elucidation
- 9 Fish eggs
- 10 Food fish
- 11 Female vampire
- 12 Tweaks a manuscript
- 13 Rock's — and the Dominos
- 22 Serpentine curve
- 24 City SSW of Moscow
- 25 Subjects of clashes
- 26 Second-year students, for short

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

MOAT FOBS WHALE
ELLA OREO AEGIS
SEAM REAL GLUES
AGIANTAMONGMEN
ROADS OLE
MEDALS POETICS
ERECT ROAN CUT
YANKEEINGENUITY
ETE NITE ONEIL
ROBERTS STEREO
UAR ASKED
ANCIENTMARINER
DIALS OBIT TUBA
EDDIE SALE EDAM
BEADS EYES DENS



Puzzle by Ed Eary

- 27 Yearn
- 28 Brag
- 29 Domesticated
- 32 Convinces of
- 34 Nero Wolfe's activity
- 35 Roman road
- 36 Strauss & Co
- 37 Hydrox rival
- 38 Menaces for warplanes
- 40 Inscribe for good
- 44 Slippery one
- 45 Commercial center in Venice
- 47 Olympians' blades
- 48 Having chutzpah
- 49 Bathing part
- 50 Kilt goods thread
- 51 In leaf
- 55 Draft classification
- 56 Apple spoiler
- 57 Winds up
- 59 Stomach muscles, for short
- 60 Toujours

Answers to any three clues in this puzzle are available by touch-tone phone: 1-900-420-5656 (95¢ per minute). Annual subscriptions are available for the best of Sunday crosswords from the last 50 years: 1-888-7-ACROSS